3. The proceedings of the Assembly commenced at 12 noon on the 19th February 1914. Dewan Bahadur P. Rajagopala Chari, Esquire, M. A., B. L., C. I. E., the Dewan, presided. There were present A. T. Forbes, Esquire, I. C. S., the Resident in Travancore and Cochin; Captain E. F. Ross, I. A., the Assistant Resident; M. R. Ry. Kerala Varma Avergal, C. S. I., Valia Koil Tampuran ; M. R. Ry. M. Krishnan Nair Avergal, B. A., B. L., the Chief Justice, and other heads of departments and offices and several non-official gentlemen.

4. The Dewan opened the Assembly with the following—

ADDRESS.

" *Gentlemen,*

By command of His Highness the Maha Raja, I gladly welcome you to the Tenth Session of the Assembly. Copies of the Administration Report for 1088—in English and in Malayalam—will, as usual, be placed in your hands, and I would invite a perusal of the report.

CASUALTIES.

2. Since I last addressed you, the Public Service has lost several high officers, the Senior Dewan Peishkar, Mr. S. Padmanabha Aiyar, the Superintendent of the Devicolam Division, Mr. A. W. L. Vernede, the Commandant of the Nayar Brigade, Col. R. D. Faunce, the Second Professor of English in His Highness the Maha Raja's College, Mr. M. LaBouchardiere, and the Senior Executive Engineer, Mr. H. A. Minchin. Mr. Padmanabha Aiyar was a capable and sound officer, whose good work in completing the Revenue Settlement of the State has already received the warm appreciation of His Highness' Government. The position of the Superintendent of the Devicolam Division is one of some difficulty, and Mr. Vernede discharged the duties of that office with ability and tact. Col. Faunce was an officer of marked efficiency ; he left the Nair Brigade in a much better condition than he found it. Mr. LaBouchardiere had been connected with His Highness the Maha Raja's College for nearly four decades, and the Education Department is all the poorer for his retirement. By Mr. Minchin's unfortunate death, we have lost a very good Engineer, who had been employed almost continuously on the Kodayar Irrigation Works, and whose memory will, I have no doubt, live long in the minds of the ryots in the Southern Division, for whom he had always such warm sympathy and with whom he succeeded in maintaining such amicable relations.

FINANCIAL.

3. The Revenue of the Government rose from Rs. 1,37,68,000 in 1087 to Rs. 1,48,12,000 in 1088, and the Expenditure from Rs. 1,34,55,000 to Rs. 1,45,98,000. In the result, the transactions of 1088 showed a Surplus of Rs. 2,14,000, raising the Government Balance from Rs. 75,78,000 at the beginning of the year to Rs. 77,92,000 at its close. In 1082 the Revenue of the State was Rs. 1,01,73,000 and the Expenditure Rs. 1,03,76,000. The revenue has thus gone up during the last six years by 46% and the expenditure by 41%. From 1083 onwards, the State has had a surplus every year, the average surplus for the period working out at Rs. 3,70,000.

MAIN HEADS OF REVENUE.

4. **Land.**—Under Land Revenue I would note the complete closure of Settlement work and the submission of the final report on the same. His Highness' Government reviewed this report at some length recently. The revenue derived from the lands belonging to the Devaswoms, or Hindu temples, has been separated, with effect from 1088, from Land Revenue proper, and taken to the credit of the Devaswoms; so also, the receipts from the irrigation cess levied in the area commanded by the Kodayar, have been taken to the head of Irrigation and other Reproductive Works. In the result, the demand and collection of Land Revenue exhibit a *nominal* falling off.

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To admit, however, of an effective comparison being made with the previous year, the figures for 1087 have also been revised, by the removal from the head of Land Revenue, of the revenue from the Devaswom lands and the irrigation cess; and you will see that the net demand rose from Rs. 35,97,000 in 1087 to Rs. 38,28,000 in 1088. Including the arrear demand of Rs. 79,000, the total demand for 1088 was Rs. 39,07,000. Out of this, a sum of Rs. 38,20,000 was collected and Rs. 18,000 written off, and the balance pending collection at the end of the year was Rs. 69,000. Six years ago—on the last day of 1082—the pending balance was Rs. 2,12,000. The resurvey of the Nedumangad taluk made progress. The Government have reason to believe that this will be over by the close of 1091. Action is being taken, as soon as the resurvey of a *pakuthi* is over and the necessary records become available, for the pending applications for waste lands to be promptly disposed of. The demand for waste lands has increased to a remarkable extent in recent years all over the State. This is a healthy sign. The Government have felt bound, in view to this increased demand and the rise in the value of land all over, to secure for the public revenue a portion of the benefit, by suitable revisions of the rates of *tharavila*. The orders on this subject are issued from time to time in the Gazette for public information. While on the subject of the Land Revenue, I would gladly acknowledge the cordial co-operation and help I have had from the Division Peishkars and Tahsildars generally in working up the efficiency of the Department.

5. **Forest.**—The administration of the Forest Department continued satisfactory under Mr. Rama Rao's capable headship. Two years ago it was pointed out in the Assembly, by one of the Members, how largely the revenue from the forests was capable of increase, without trenching in any way on their capital wealth. I would invite your attention to the circumstance that the net revenue of 1088 was almost double that of the previous year; the increase over the net revenue of 1083 has been nearly 230%.

6. **Salt.**—The net revenue from Salt practically remained the same as in the previous year, about Rs. 10,37,500; the selling price of the home-salt in the Government factories and depots was raised from Re. 1–6 as. to Re. 1–8 as. per maund, and in the bankshalls from Re. 1–8 as. to Re. 1–9 as. per maund. The price of Bombay salt was raised from Re. 1-9 as. to Re. 1-11 as. per maund in the depots, and from Re. 1-11 as. to Re. 1–12 as. per maund in the bankshalls; in the Munambam depot alone the price remained the same—Re. 1–9 as. per maund. Careful enquiry elicited the fact that, under the old rates, the Government were *not* securing the net revenue of Re. one per maund, which they should collect by way of duty, and the slight increases in the departmental selling prices had therefore to be made. The average consumption of salt per head of population, in 1088, was 23·4 lbs., as compared with 19·38 lbs. in the Madras Presidency and 21·82 lbs. in Cochin.

7. **Excise.**—Taking together the three heads of Abkari, Opium and Ganja, and Tobacco, the gross collections rose from Rs. 27,82,000 to Rs. 30,42,000, the increase being Rs. 2,60,000; the expenditure also rose, from Rs. 2,73,000 to Rs. 2,76,000; in the result, there was an increase in the net revenue of Rs. 2,57,000. The excise policy of the Government has been to bring the consumption of the articles under more rigorous control and to raise the prices of the commodities so far as that could be done without offering a violent inducement to illicit practices. Under Abkari, I would particularly draw your attention to the fact that the facilities for the consumption of liquor have been steadily going down, *e. g.*, the number of country liquor shops in the State went down from 4,634 in 1087 to 2,288 in 1088, *i. e.*, by more than 50%. The number of these shops in 1083 was 7,050. That will give you an idea of the very substantial reduction which has been made in recent years in the matter of the facilities for the consumption of liquor. Taking it according to population, there was one country liquor shop for 419 people in 1083, whereas in 1088 there was one for 1,498 people. Again, the number of opium and ganja shops in 1088 was 241, against 399 in 1083. Taking Abkari, Opium and Ganja, and Tobacco, all together, the incidence of taxation per head of population works out at 25 chackrams in 1088, against 21 chackrams in 1083.

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